1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Wendy A. Kaplan (BBO #259360) E-mail: wkaplan @ wendykaplan.com Attorney for Plaintiff, Jason Pashko LAW Offices of Wendy A. Kaplan 18 Tremont Street, Suite 704 Boston, MA 02108 Telephone: (617)557-4114 Facsimile: (617)557-6196  Rita Morales (SBN 127115) E-mail: rmorales @ moralesemploymentlaw.com Local Counsel for Plaintiff, Jason Pashko Miranda-Morales Law Firm 501 Santa Monica Blvd., Suite 610 Santa Monica, CA 90401 Telephone: (310)460-2837 Facsimile: (310)460-2839	m		
10 11	Haiten State	S DISTRICT COURT		
12	CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA			
13	JASON PASHKO,	) Case No. CV08-3379 GPS (PJWx)		
14	PLAINTIFF,	) CASE TO. C 7 00-33 77 GT 5 (1 3 WA) )		
15	vs.	<ul><li>FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR</li><li>DAMAGES</li></ul>		
16	VIKING RIVER CRUISES, LLC, a	) 1. Discrimination Based on Ancestry in		
17	DELAWARE CORPORATION and VIKING RIVER CRUISES, INC., a DELAWARE CORPORATION AND	Violation of Government Code §12940, et seq.		
18	DOES 1-100	) 2. Harassment Based on Ancestry in Violation of Cal. Govt. Code § 12940,		
19 20	Defendants.	) et seq.		
21		3. Retaliation in Violation of Government Code § 12940, et seq.		
22		4. Violation of the Ralph Act		
23		5. Breach of Contract		
24		<ol> <li>Wrongful Termination in Violation of Public Policy</li> </ol>		
25		DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL		
26				
27 28				
40	4			
	1. First Amended Complaint for Damages			

damages as well as declaratory and injunctive relief.

2

3

## INTRODUCTION

4 5

6

7 8

9 10

11

12 13

14

15

16

17

18 19

20 21

2223

25

24

26 27

28

# JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. There is diversity of citizenship through which the plaintiff invokes federal jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C.A. 1332(a)(1), as plaintiff is a citizen of Massachusetts and defendant corporations do their principal business in the Central District of California.

1. Plaintiff Jason Pashko seeks redress for the prolonged, ceaseless pattern of anti-

Semitic harassment he experienced while working for defendants Viking River Cruises

corporations, harassment which resulted in a hostile work environment and, ultimately, in his

constructive discharge from his employment. Plaintiff seeks compensatory and exemplary

3. The amount in controversy exceeds the sum or value of \$75,000.

### THE PARTIES

- 4. Plaintiff Jason Pashko is a citizen of majority age residing in Acton, Bristol County, Massachusetts. From August 2006 until November 2006, plaintiff was employed in a variety of executive capacities for defendants, two of the Viking River Cruises International corporations. Plaintiff is of Jewish ancestry, and as such is an individual within the protection of the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.
- 5. Defendant Viking River Cruises International LLC ("Viking LLC") is a for-profit limited liability corporation organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, whose principal place of business is in Woodland Hills in the Central District of California.
- 6. Viking River Cruises International Inc. ("Viking INC"), is a for-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Delaware, but whose principal place of business is in Woodland Hills in the Central District of California, and is a sister corporation to Viking LLC.
- 7. Viking LLC and Viking INC are two companies within the Viking River Cruises Group, of which the parent company is Viking River Cruises SA, a Luxemburg company headquartered in Switzerland.

- 8. Defendants DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, are employees of the Defendants and Plaintiff, on information and belief alleges that Defendants DOES 1 through 100 are residents of the County of Los Angeles, and/or residents of the United States. At all relevant times, defendants DOES 1 through 100, were under the direct supervision, employ, and control of defendants Viking LLC and Viking INC. In doing the acts alleged herein, defendants DOES 1 through 100 were acting within the course and scope of their employment and agency with defendants Viking LLC and Viking INC. The true names and capacities of defendants named herein as DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, are unknown to plaintiff who therefore sue such defendants by such fictitious names pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 171 and the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Plaintiff is informed and believes that the DOE defendants are California residents and/or the United States of America. Plaintiff will amend this Complaint to show true names and capacities when they have been determined. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on the basis of such information and belief alleges, that each defendant DOE herein is in some manner responsible for the acts complained of and damages herein alleged.
- 9. The true names and capacities of defendants, whether a corporation, agent, individual, or otherwise, named herein as DOES 1 through 100, inclusive, are unknown to plaintiff who therefore sues such defendants by such fictitious names pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 171 and the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Plaintiff is informed and believes that the DOE defendants are residents of California and/or the United States of America. Plaintiff will amend this Complaint to show true names and capacities when they have been determined. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and on the basis of such information and belief alleges, that each defendant DOE herein is in some manner responsible for the sexual harassment, assault and other related conduct, and damages herein alleged and that Plaintiff's injuries as herein alleged were proximately caused by the conduct of such defendants.
- 10. Defendants Viking LLC and Viking INC employ more than five (5) persons, and as such are employers within the scope of the California Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA").

# EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES 11. On or about January 23, 2007, the plaintiff filed a Complaint of Discrimination against defendant Viking River Cruises International LLC and Torstein Hagen, the CEO of the Viking River Cruises Group with the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing ("DFEH"). A copy of plaintiff's administrative Complaint is attached as Exhibit 1 and is herein incorporated by reference. 12. On or about March 7, 2007, the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing issued plaintiff a right to sue letter, enabling him to file this action within one (1) year,

# FACTS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

which Plaintiff did on May 16, 2007.

- 13. During the summer of 2006, defendant corporations recruited plaintiff, who was then employed elsewhere, to work for Viking LLC/Viking INC as a Vice President for Strategy and Business Development.
- 14. During his initial interview with Viking CEO Hagen, Hagen asked plaintiff his ethnic background.
- 15. Upon learning that Pashko is in part of Jewish ancestry, Hagen made disparaging comments about a former Viking employee of Jewish ancestry. This was the onset of a pattern of Hagen making disparaging comments about and to plaintiff concerning his Jewish ancestry which persisted throughout plaintiff's employment with defendants.
- 16. Plaintiff began his employment as Vice President for Strategy and Business Development for defendant corporations on or about September 5, 2006.
- 17. Plaintiff at all times performed his work to the legitimate expectations of his employer.
- 18. Defendants Viking corporations failed to take reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, including but not limited to discriminatory harassment, from occurring at Viking.
- 19. CEO Hagen told plaintiff he was being paid more than others at his level, and that to conceal this fact from plaintiff's peers, he would have SA, the parent corporation, pay part of plaintiff's salary.

- 20. From the inception of his employment, Hagen repeatedly referred to plaintiff by a variety of discriminatory and offensive terms, including but not limited to "Jew boy" and "my Jew." CEO Hagen further repeatedly referred to a prior Jewish employee whom he had fired, always in disparaging terms and inevitably in terms of the common Jewish ancestry of the plaintiff and the fired employee.
- 21. On or about September 6, 2006, or plaintiff's second day of employment, Viking Chief Financial Officer Bob Roe told plaintiff that Viking would cover the cost of plaintiff's hotel accommodations and other living expenses until plaintiff purchased a residence in the area.
- 22. Plaintiff relied on that representation, moved from Henderson, Nevada, and began living in high-end hotels, including particularly the Loew's Hotel in Santa Monica, California, where CEO Hagen stayed during his most of his numerous and extended trips to California.
- 23. Plaintiff also relied on that representation to look for a home to purchase for his family.
- 24. During the first weeks of his employment, in addition to referring to plaintiff as "Jew boy" and "my Jew", Hagen also repeatedly compared him to a prior employee who was Jewish, stating, repeatedly, that "I fired the last Jew who was no good, so I expect the same from you."
- 25. Hagen further repeatedly introduced plaintiff to others by referencing his Jewish ancestry, generally in a negative context.
- 26. On or about October 5, 2006, Hagen embarrassed and demeaned plaintiff by referring to him negatively as a "half-Jew" to Hagen's own personal trainer; Hagen also stated that Pashko "hasn't disappointed" him yet, "though he's half-Jewish, you know."
- 27. On or about October 10, 2006, Viking through its Board of Directors promoted plaintiff to be Senior Vice President for Sales & Marketing, overriding Hagen's objections.

  As SVP, plaintiff was responsible for marketing, public relations, and sales in North America.
- 28. After Plaintiff complained of the anti-Semitic derogatory comments, remarks, and harassment, Hagen then accelerated his anti-Jewish harassment of plaintiff. This included but was not limited to repeated anti-Jewish slurs, including even an unapologetic account of how his

father extolled Nazi warriors he had sympathized with in World War II as "excellent men and excellent soldiers."

- 29. After his promotion to SVP, plaintiff began challenging Hagen's discriminatory and other abusive conduct, and objected to Hagen's anti-Jewish slurs, telling Hagen they were "bad form" and disturbed him.
- 30. Hagen responded to plaintiff's criticisms by ceaselessly comparing him to "the Jew that failed" while referring to Pashko as "the Jew (or half-Jew) that hasn't failed me yet;" repeatedly threatening to fire him; losing his temper, seemingly uncontrollably; and pounding his fists on the table.
- 31. During several of these occasions, some of which occurred in the presence of others, plaintiff was physically intimidated and was apprehensive of bodily harm by Hagen against his person.
- 32. On or about November 11, 2006, Hagen blew up at plaintiff concerning plans to mail customers holiday greeting cards, which the CEO labeled a bad idea which had originated with plaintiff's Jewish predecessor. Hagen insisted that the company send out only Christmas cards, ranting "We are Vikings. We are a Christian company!" Plaintiff reasonably construed these words as a message that he was not the appropriate person to be an executive at Viking due to his Jewish ancestry.
- 33. Later on that same day, apropos of nothing, Hagen told plaintiff that "one Armenian is worth ten Jews."
- 34. Later that same day, during a business meeting, when plaintiff and Viking CEO Hagen disagreed on a business strategy, Hagen lost control, blew up at plaintiff, and told plaintiff to "shut [his] fucking mouth."
- 35. On the following day, unprovoked, Hagen again lost control, waved his fist at plaintiff, and lunged across the table at him as though to physically assault plaintiff.
- 36. During Hagen's tirade, plaintiff was physically and otherwise intimidated, and became apprehensive that Hagen would assault him and inflict bodily harm upon him. Plaintiff then stated "I'm done," and left the next day to return to his home in Henderson, Nevada.

- 37. After plaintiff's constructive discharge, as described above, plaintiff contacted Hagen and requested that Viking reimburse him for outstanding business expenses, as had been promised to him on the second day of his employment.
- 38. Defendants refused to reimburse plaintiff the considerable expenses he had incurred while living in the Loew's Hotel, among other high-end hotels, and searching for a permanent residence for himself and his family.
- 39. As a direct and proximate result of defendants' discriminatory and other misconduct, plaintiff has been grievously injured. He suffered the loss of wages and benefits of his employment, a diminution of his earning capacity, and severe emotional distress. His inability to obtain health care, including but not limited to health insurance, for his family, including particularly for his wife, a type-1 diabetic, caused both plaintiff and his family to suffer additional injury, including but not limited to irreparable medical harm. Plaintiff further incurred legal and medical costs.

All damages continue to this date.

# FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION: DISCRIMINATION BASED ON ANCESTRY IN VIOLATION OF GOVERNMENT CODE §12940, ET SEQ.

- 40. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as though fully set forth herein, each and every allegation set forth in paragraphs 1-39 above.
- 41. Plaintiff is of Jewish ancestry, and is thus protected from unlawful employment discrimination and harassment by Cal.Gov.Code 12940 (a) and (j)(1).
- 42. As alleged herein and in violation of California Government Code §12940, et seq., defendants, and each of them, discriminated against plaintiff on the basis of his ancestry, Jewish, exposing him to a hostile work environment permeated by severe and pervasive anti-Jewish harassment perpetrated by the CEO Torstein Hagen. Defendants further violated plaintiff's rights to a work environment free of discrimination by failing to adequately investigate discrimination and harassment based on ancestry and by failing to take all reasonable steps

 necessary to prevent future discrimination from occurring as required by California Government Code §12940(k).

43. As a result of defendants' discriminatory, harassing, and other unlawful acts as alleged herein, plaintiff is entitled to compensatory and exemplary or punitive damages, reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit as provided in Section 12965(b) of the California Government Code.

# SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION HARASSMENT BASED ON ANCESTRY IN VIOLATION OF THE FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT, CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE §12940, ET SEQ.

- 44. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as though fully set forth herein, each and every allegation set forth in paragraphs 1-43 above.
- 45. As alleged herein, and in violation of California Government Code §12940, et seq., defendants, through their CEO Torstein Hagen, harassed plaintiff on the basis of his Jewish ancestry. Defendants further violated plaintiff's rights to a work environment free from harassment by creating and allowing an anti-Jewish hostile work environment to exist for plaintiff, including severe and pervasive verbal abuse, threats of termination unrelated to plaintiff's work performance, and physically intimidating actions. Defendants also violated plaintiff's rights by failing to adequately investigate harassment and discrimination based on ancestry, and by failing to take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent future harassment and discrimination from occurring as required by California Government Code §12940(k).
- 46. Plaintiff was continually subjected to a hostile and intimidating work environment permeated with anti-Jewish harassment so severe that it unreasonably interfered with his work performance and caused him severe emotional distress, and culminated in his constructive discharge.
- 47. By aforesaid acts and omissions of defendants, and each of them, plaintiff has been directly and legally caused to suffer actual damages including but not limited to loss of earnings and benefits and future earning capacity.

- 48. As a further direct and legal result of the acts and conduct of defendants, and each of them, as aforesaid, plaintiff has been caused to and has suffered and continues to suffer severe emotional and mental distress, anguish, humiliation, shock, pain, discomfort and anxiety, the exact nature, duration and extent of which are presently unknown to plaintiff.
- 49. As a result of defendants' discriminatory and harassing acts as alleged herein, plaintiff is entitled to reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit as provided in Section 12965(b) of the California Government Code.
- 50. As a result of defendants' discriminatory, harassing, and other unlawful acts as alleged herein, plaintiff is entitled to compensatory and punitive or exemplary damages, as provided in Section 12965(b) of the California Government Code.

# THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION FOR RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF FEHA AGAINST DEFENDANT VIKING LLC AND VIKING INC. AND DOES 1 THROUGH 100

- 51. Plaintiff re-alleges and incorporates paragraphs 1-50 of the Complaint as though fully set forth herein.
- 52. Plaintiff repeatedly protested said harassment and discrimination and brought said conduct to the attention of management of Viking LLC and Viking Inc.
- 53. Viking LLC and Viking Inc., rather than taking adequate remedial measures retaliated against Plaintiff by engaging in further harassment and other conduct according to proof.
- 54. The foregoing conduct by Viking LLC and Viking Inc. and each of them was in retaliation for Plaintiff protesting illegal harassment and discrimination in violation of Government Code Section 12940(h) and other provisions of FEHA, which preclude an employer from retaliating against any employee for protesting conduct prescribed by FEHA.
- 55. As a proximate result of the said retaliation as aforepled, Plaintiff suffered emotional distress damages in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of this court and according to proof.

- 56. As a further and proximate result of the retaliation as aforepled, Plaintiff was required to and did seek medical attention, and will need medical attention in the future, all to Plaintiff's damages in a sum according to proof.
- 57. As a further proximate result of this retaliation as aforepled, Plaintiff lost employment benefits, including lost wages and fringe benefits in an amount in excess of the minimum jurisdiction of the court and according to proof.
- 58. As a further proximate result of this retaliation as aforepled, Plaintiff was required to and did retain attorneys and is therefore entitled to an award of attorney's fees according to proof.
- 59. The aforepled conduct of the defendants constitutes oppression, fraud, and malice thereby entitling Plaintiff to an award of punitive damages as to those defendants only.

### FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION VIOLATION OF THE RALPH ACT

- 60. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as though fully set forth herein, each and every allegation set forth in paragraphs 1-59 above.
- 61. Plaintiff has the right to be free from any intimidation or threat of violence based on his ancestry.
- 62. Defendants violated Cal. Civ. Code §51.7 and 52, et seq., with CEO Hagen, and other agents/employees of Defendant, subjecting plaintiff to repeated threats of violence, with ill will and malice, due to his Jewish ancestry.
- 63. As a result of defendants' discriminatory, abusive and intimidating behavior, plaintiff is entitled to compensatory and punitive damages, reasonable attorney's fees and costs of suit as provided in Section 12965(b) of the California Government Code.

# FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION BREACH OF CONTRACT

64. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as though fully set forth herein, each and every allegation set forth in paragraphs 1-63 above.

- 65. Defendants represented to plaintiff that Viking corporations would pay for his expenses, including but not limited to food and lodging, for the period of time where plaintiff was residing in California but had not yet found a permanent residence.
- 66. Plaintiff reasonably relied on this representation, and stayed in the Loew's Hotel, primarily but among other high-end hotels, where plaintiff did considerable business on behalf of the Viking Corporations.
- 67. Plaintiff further devoted considerable time and effort to locate and purchase a home, and was in the process of doing so when he was constructively discharged.
- 68. Although plaintiff demanded reimbursement of his expenses, defendants refused and failed to so reimburse him.
- 69. As a direct result of defendants' breach of contract, plaintiff is entitled to compensatory damages for costs incurred by plaintiff in reliance on defendants' promises.

# SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION WRONGFUL TERMINATION IN VIOLATION OF PUBLIC POLICY

- 70. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference, as though fully set forth herein, each and every allegation set forth in paragraphs 1-69 above.
- 71. The public policy of California bars discriminatory harassment based on an individual's ancestry, as codified in Cal. Civ. Code 12940(a), (j)(1).
- 72. The state's public policy is further emphasized by the provision of the California Civil Code, 12940(k) requiring employers to take all reasonable steps necessary to prevent discrimination, harassment and retaliation. Sections 6310(b) and 6400 of the California Labor Code expresses California's fundamental public policy ensuring that employees are not required to work in unsafe or unhealthy work environments. Sections 2800 and 2802 obligate the employer to indemnify Plaintiff for his losses resulting from the employer's want of ordinary care. Plaintiff was discriminated against, harassed and retaliated against for his protests and complaints regarding his reasonable belief that Defendants were violating the foregoing statutes.

	h. For loss of earnings, according to proof;		
2	i. For punitive and exemplary damages, according to proof;		
	j. For attorney's fees;		
4	k. For prejudgment interest; and		
5			
6	as this Court deams just and proper.		
7	DEMAND FOR JURY TRIAL		
8	Plaintiff Jason Pashko hereby demand		
9	Plaintiff Jason Pashko hereby demands a trial by jury on all counts.		
10	Dated: June 11, 2008		
11	THE MIRANDA-MODAL FOR A MAPLAN AND		
12	For Plaintiff Jason Pashko		
13	By Wilness Kappen		
14	Wendy A. Kaplan		
15	$\Lambda$		
16	$\mathcal{M}_{\mathcal{I}}$		
17	By: Rite Morales		
18	TOTAL TAXONELOS		
19			
20			
21			
22			
23			
24			
25	•		
26			
27			
28			
-	13.		
	First Amended Complaint for Damages		
l)			

# **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 11th day of June, 2008, a true copy of the foregoing First Amended Complaint for Damages was served by United States mail on Defendants and their

counsel of record, to wit: Doug Wickham, Esquire, Littler Mendelson, PC, 2049 Century Park

East, Fifth Floor, Los Angeles, California 90067-3107.

<u>/s/Wendy A. Kaplan</u> Wendy A. Kaplan, BBO #259360 Law Offices of Wendy A. Kaplan 18 Tremont Street, Suite 704 Boston, MA 02108 (617) 557-4114 Attorney for Plaintiff

14.

# \* \* \* EMPLOYMENT \* \* \*

COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE CALIFORNIA FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT

DFEH # E-200607-G-0930-00-C

FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING ACT	DFEH USE ONL	Y
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLYOUR NAME (INCleate Mr. or Ms.)	OYMENT AND HOUSING	-
address Jason Pashko	702 -56 C	R (INCLUDE AREA CODE
151 Newton Road		1001
CITY/STATE/ZIP	COUNTY	
NAMED IS THE EMPLOYER PERSON LABOR COOMING		COUNTY CODE
OR STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY WHO DISCRIMINATED AG	<u>/_0143  </u>   WE.	
- Viking River Cruises (International) 11	_C TELEPHONE NUM	BER (Include Area Code
ADURESS		DEEH USE ONLY
CITY/STATE/ZIP	COLINE	:
NO OF SMALL PROPERTY.	COUNTY	COUNTY CODE
TOOK PLACE (mooth day and year	ing discrimination 11/12/OC	RESPONDENT CODE
On 11 17 100		<u>'</u>
	se promotion denie	d family or medical leave
	so transfer denk	d equal pay d right to wear penis
		d pregnancy accommodation
by Torstein Hagen, Chairman and Chief E	Executive Officer	_ <del></del>
Name of Person Job Title (supervisor/manager/pers	ionnel director/etc.)	
because of my: — sex	ganger	Ylast
agemanital statiusmenial clashityreligionsexual orientation	genetic characteristic Protestin	liccle one) filing: g: participating in
sace/color association other (specify)	. investiga	tion (retailation for)
the reason given by Torstein Hugen, Chairman and	C1 2. 5 - 2: 000	
Name of Person and Job Title	Chief Executive Off	nur
Mos hossus 1		•
Was because due to my Jewish Angestry I was of please	physically intimidak	d. Shouted at
	led in front of my c	
And perent to county.	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	o-wires and
be reason(s)]		
wish to pursue this matter in court. I hereby request that the Department of Fair Employment and want a federal notice of right-to-sue, I must visit the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Comprise	Manata - Man	
want a federal notice of right-to-sue, I must visit the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commiss DEEH "Notice of Case Closure," or within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory act, whichever is e	indusing provide a right-to-sue notice. tion (EEOC) to file a complaint within 3	tunderstand that if I  days of receipt of the
\$1	oct (5G) 1	
nave not been coerced into making this request, nor do I make it based on fear of retaliation if I distinguished and Housing's policy to not process or reopen a complaint once the complaint has be	o not do so: I understand it is the Dep	artment of Fair
deciare under penalty of periors under the toronto.	"" COMMISSION OF THE DASIS OF "COMMISSION	f Elopatoral Consult and a
declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is tated on my information and belief, and as to those matters I believe it to be true.	true and correct of my own knowledg	e except as to matters
ated 1/23/07	//	
- July Harry	COMPLAINANT'S SIGNATURE	
	•	
City	RECEIVED	EXHIBIT 1
D477 51 m FF 5 6 6002	FEB -9 2007 .	PAGE 15.

DEEH-300-03 (01/05)
DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING

Department of Fair Employment and Housing STA

STATE OF CALIFORNIA